

**Thomas Jefferson to Aaron Burr, May 20, 1798, from
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Ford.**

TO AARON BURR J. MSS.

Philadelphia, May 20. 98.

Dear Sir, —When I had the pleasure of seeing you here, I spoke to you on the case of a friend of mine, Dr. James Currie, of Richmond, and asked the favor of you to proceed, in the way then spoken of, to recover against Robert Morris, Dr. Currie's demand, the papers establishing which you had received. I have just received a letter from him wishing this matter to be pressed. I take the liberty therefore of repeating my request, & that you will be so good as to send to mr. John Barnes, merchant south 3d street, who is my agent here a note of your own fee & of any costs which it may be necessary to advance & he will answer them now & from time to time on my account, whether I am here or not. I have not heard from mr. Burwell: but I know it to be his wish to have the same proceedings as shall be pursued for Dr. Currie. Mr. Barnes is his agent for his money matters at this place, so that his costs you will be so good as to note separately to him. His name is Lewis Burwell. He is also of Richmond.

This being merely a letter of business I shall only add assurances of the esteem & respect with which I am dear sir your most obedient & most humble servant.¹

1 Other letters to Burr on this subject are as follows:

Philadelphia May 26th. 98.

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Dear Sir,—I received yesterday your favor of the 24th. The other notes delivered by Mr. Burwell to Mr. Ludlow belonged three of them to Dr Currie, & the rest to himself. To wit

Dr. Currie's Doll.

John Nicholson's note to Rob. Morris dated Nov. 18. 94 for 3500 payable in 3 years

do to do Nov. 18. 94 3500 do

do to do Nov. 18. 94 4000 do

11,000

Mr. Burwell's

John Nicholson's note to Rob. Morris dated Nov. 20. 94 for 4000 payable in 3 years

do to do Nov. 20. 94 4000 do

do to do Jan. 15. 95 2500 do

do to do Mar. 1. 95 4000 do

14,500

This last one of Mr. Burwell's was not delivered to mr. Ludlow, but will be handed to him by mr. Barnes by this day's post. You will therefore be pleased to proceed in the name of Dr. James Currie for the three first notes, amounting to 11,000 Dollars. You mention that discretionary powers must be given to some person in N. York in order that you may be able to associate these gentlemen in a general compromise with some others for whom you will obtain judgment in July. Dr. Currie has given me full powers to act for him, & I hereby give you full & discretionary powers to do for him whatever you may think for his interest. I enclose you one of his letters to me sufficiently evidencing his committing the

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matter to me. Mr. Barnes is authorized by mr. Burwell to take the same steps for him which I do for Dr. Currie. He will therefore write to you this day. Dr. Currie has another claim by judgment recovered here against Griffin & Morris which may be the subject of a future letter to you. Perhaps, after I shall have seen Mr. Ingersoll his attorney (now absent from town).

If Congress mean to adjourn at all (which I doubt) I shall stay here till they adjourn. If they do not, after passing the land tax, I shall consider it as evidence they mean to make their sessions permanent, & shall then go home for the season. I am with great & sincere, esteem, Dear Sir, your friend & servant.

Philadelphia, June 16. 98.

Dear Sir,—In my letter of May 26. I mentioned to you that Dr. Currie had another demand by judgment against John Tayloe Griffin as principal, & Robert Morris garnishee, which should be the subject of a future letter to you. I now enclose you a transcript by the record of the Supreme Court of this state. It seems by this (I have not examined the record with minute attention) that the court have considered Robert Morris as holding property of Griffin's to the amount of £4305 Pensva currency = 11480 Dolls not due, as stated on interrogatory, till Dec. 3. 1800. But that interest at 5 per cent must have been payable annually, as he confesses judgment for £959-8-8 interest on that sum to Dec. 3, 95. which was paid to mr. Ingersoll, & a scire facias issued for the interest of the year 1796 being £215-5 has been issued since. On this last, nothing has been done, as no effects here can be got at. This interest therefore for the year 1796. & now also for the year 1797, is due & immediately recoverable as to the principal. I know not how the laws may be with you: but in Virginia, where we have courts of Chancery on the principles of that of England, tho' in a court of law the principal could not be demanded before due, yet the Chancery, in consideration of the hazard in which it is placed by the change of circumstances of Rob. Morris would either oblige him to give security or sequester any property of his which the plaintiff would point out. If it be so with you, then we may hope that the principal may be

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secured so as to be received in 1800, & the interest for 96. & 97. immediately recovered. I will pray you however to have done for Dr. Currie both as to principal & interest whatever your laws will authorize for the best. I enclose you a letter from him referring you to me, & I hereby give you as full powers to act herein as he has given to me. I leave this place in the morning of the 20th. & would thank you to be informed what prospect you think there is of these several matters. If I am gone, the letter will follow & find me at home. I am with great esteem dear sir your friend & servant.

Monticello, Nov. 12. 1798.

Dear Sir,—Dr. Currie, on whose behalf I troubled you last summer, being anxious to learn something of the prospect he may have of recovering from Robert Morris, I take the liberty of asking a line directed to me at this place where I shall still be long enough to receive it. I should not have troubled you but that you expected early in the summer to be able to judge what could be done. I am aware at the same time that the fever at New York may have disturbed all legal proceedings.

I did not mean to say a word on politics, but it occurs that I have seen in the New York papers a calumny which I suppose will run through the union, that I had written by Doctr. Logan letters to Merlin & Taleyrand. On retiring from the Secretary of state's office, I determined to drop all correspondence with France, knowing the base calumnies which would be built on the most innocent correspondence. I have not therefore written a single letter to that country, within that period except to Mr. Short on his own affairs merely which are under my direction, and once or twice to Colo. Monroe. By Logan I did not write even a letter to Mr. Short, nor to any other person whatever. I thought this notice of the matter due to my friends, though I do not go into the newspapers with a formal declaration of it. I am &c.